

*From the Author J. B. Esq. of
Inn. J. A. 11641 h 9*

THE

D Y I N G N E G R O,

A

P O E T I C A L E P I S T L E,

F R O M

A B L A C K,

Who shot himself on board a vessel in the river Thames;
to his intended W I F E.

Yet the muse listen'd to the plaints he made,
Such moving plaints as nature could inspire;
To me the muse his tender plea convey'd,
But smooth'd, and suited to the sounding lyre.

SHENSTONE,

The SECOND EDITION with ADDITIONS.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. FLEXNEY, opposite Gray's-Inn-Gate, Holborn, 1774.

D Y I N G N E G R O

P O E T I C A L E P I S T L E

F R O M

A B L A C K

Who shot himself on board a vessel in the river Thames,
to his friend W. H. B.



Yet the muse himself to the plains he made,
Such moving plains as nature could inspire;
To me the muse's tender plea conveyed,
But unobtain'd, and failed to the sounding lyre.

Shewston

The Second Edition with Additions.

L O N D O N

Printed for W. PARKER, opposite Gray's-Inn-Gate, Holborn, 1774.

DEDICATION.

HAVING been, through indignation, betrayed into the dangerous character of an Author, I sought among the professed philosophers of the 18th century, one whose name I might consistently prefix to an assertion of the rights of nature, and who would not blush at the homage of an unknown and unambitious bard. But I found that modern Philosophy herself participated of the refinement of modern manners: she has forgotten that she once inhabited the lowly roof of Socrates, and shared the frugal meals of Epaminondas; she no longer numbers in her train Senators and Generals, who descending from the seat of magistracy, or the car of triumph, did not disdain to cultivate with their victorious arm, that earth which they had defended with their blood. Her votaries are not now those stubborn souls who defied the tyrant on his throne, or in his death vindicated the rights of their country and of mankind. The rugged manners of Cato and Brutus, are no longer formidable to usurpers, nor do the harsh principles of Diogenes suffuse a momentary blush upon the cheek of monarchy itself. Modern Philosophy, like modern Honor, has chosen its residence in Courts and Palaces. There we find her favoured votaries prostrate at the foot of thrones, and kissing the sacred dust. If she speaks, it is to join her whispers to the thunders of prerogative, and to teach the subject world, that neither the will of Heaven, nor of Heaven-descended Kings must be opposed.

Little qualified, either by nature or education, to sacrifice at the altars of this new divinity, I dared not implore the patronage of its ministers and priests; still less did I find myself disposed to invoke those literati of the Continent, who are enemies to princes, yet stoop to flatter their minions and sycophants; moralists, yet men of pleasure; philosophers, yet foes to natural religion; sceptics, yet dogmatical; and who, while they profess disinterestedness and independence, lead the venal muses to voluntary prostitution. Yet I found one man, whose matchless eloquence is less formidable than the fortitude with which he has developed the principles, and defended the rights of human nature, whose virtue is as unequalled as his genius, and whose life is a nobler pattern of imitation than his writings; who, rejecting the supercilious bounty of the vain, yet unpitied and ungenerous great, exerts a painful industry amidst the evils and infirmities of old age, and prefers exile, poverty, and obscurity, to all the riches and the honors which ambitious meanness extorts from Kings.—After this portrait is it necessary to subscribe a name, and to acknowledge, that I dedicate this poem to JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU?

It is probable that this tribute to your virtues may never reach your ears, and that the following lines, like the occasion of them, will soon be consigned to oblivion. Nor will the author regret that he cannot share that immortality which awaits your name, and which his disposition asks as little as his genius merits. Yet on this first, and probably last occasion, in which I shall obtrude my sentiments upon the world, I hope I shall be excused, if instead of addressing some rich idiot, or titled slave, whose approbation would be my severest satire; I inscribe a piece, whose only merit is the humanity and freedom of its sentiments, to that man, from whose writings I have principally derived them.

Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem.

Happy should I esteem myself could these feeble efforts once more awaken that irresistible eloquence, which was never prostituted to falsehood, or denied to truth; those talents of reasoning and investigation, which can never fail to convince the mind, that is not debased by voluntary and incorrigible error; and that virtuous enthusiasm, which seems inspired by Heaven itself for the instruction of its creatures. How should I rejoice to see a cause like this rescued from my weak pen; to see the rights of humanity vindicated by him, who most intimately feels their force, and is most capable of expressing what he feels; to see that insolence, that successful avarice confounded, which, under the mask of commerce, has already ravaged the two extremities of the globe!—Conse-

crate

Crave to the abhorrence and the instruction of posterity those insatiable wretches, whose most pardonable offence it is, to have spread unprovoked desolation over the most beautiful regions of the earth, to have massacred the Bramin in the midst of his uncontaminated feasts, and to have stained with blood the purest altars of the Deity.—Should there be room for scenes less dreadful, though equally instructive and important; let the glowing colours of your enchanting pencil exhibit a nation renowned for arts and arms; let the surrounding ocean be covered with her fleets; and let her boast an inflexible sternness, and an unconquerable valour. Paint a savage and gloomy liberty exulting amidst the shock of foreign invasions and domestic tumults: let her wield a bloody ax, and trample alike on the mitre and the diadem: let superstition and civil war conspire to exalt her, until she has trampled over opposition, and erected a temple, whose foundations should appear durable, as the world itself. Beneath a milder sky let peace introduce the genius and arts which adorned the states of Athens and of Rome, without insuring their duration: let gentler manners, and a less ferocious dignity succeed; let philosophy and science glory in a race of illustrious disciples, whose labours may dispel the gloom of fanaticism, and teach mankind whatever the Almighty has permitted them to know.

—Here, while the delighted eye of presumption gazes with rapture, and pronounces the tablet perfect and eternal,—reverse the scene, and inscribe the mortifying lesson of human imbecillity. Introduce commerce and posterity spreading over the land, and enervating the minds of freemen with a secret, but swift infection. Let avarice and sensuality succeed to honor; faction and servitude usurp the place of liberty; and manly reason, like a fettered lion, be dragged in triumph by fashion and caprice. Explain the eternal principles which providence has decreed, shall influence the fate of nations; the causes which exalt them to security and dominion, or plunge them into that abyss of baseness and corruption from whence they can no more emerge. Should there exist a nation so blind, as to be elated by those things which are the surest marks of its approaching ruin, let it be roused from its lethargy, and awaken'd to its danger. Ask such a nation, of what avail will be its transitory splendor, when posterity shall behold a nobility without manners, a populace without industry, and a people without shame? Ask what kingdom has been well defended by a mercenary and unprincipled army, after the valour of its inhabitants had been extinguished, or what rights have been asserted by an ignorant and luxurious senate, after they had been meanly abandoned, or infamously sold by their own

citizens?

citizens? If they boast their riches and their commerce, tell them that these may attract an enterprising foe, but never yet have repelled an invader,—that the riches of slaves are the property of their masters, and that no nation has ever long preserved its liberty, after having lost its virtue.

Such are the scenes I would present to my countrymen, could I boast an eloquence like your's : such are the lessons for which you have been proscribed and persecuted by a world which you have enlightened. Yet has not the ingratitude of mankind ever tainted your philanthropy. You have taught us, that the sublime maxims of philosophy are not always confined to indolent speculation ; you have shewn that a stoical severity is not always inconsistent with a feeling heart ; and that the simplicity of ignorance is compatible with the most exalted genius.

From the trifle now inscribed with your name, neither profit nor glory were expected by the author. It was occasioned by a particular fact ;* but to the disgrace of human nature, the subject is sufficiently general to interest every heart not totally callous and impenetrable. We boast of the gentleness of our manners, and think the rugged virtues of antiquity ill-adapted to the genius of the present times. When you ask if Brutus sold his country, or the Spartan matrons frequented assemblies of nocturnal riot, it is thought a sufficient answer, that we do not expose our children, or whip them at the altar of Diana, and that this is the age of generous sentiment, and refined humanity. I will not compare the education of an ancient Spartan, with that of a British nobleman. Let eunuchs and *figurants*, those respectable guardians of modern discipline, insult the memory of Lycurgus ; and fellows of colleges establish their monkish institutions on the ruin of the Lyceum. Let the present age enjoy the boldest panegyrics its admirers can bestow. But of our boasted improvements, and frivolous politeness, be well acquired by the loss of manly firmness and independence ; if in order to feel as men it be necessary to adopt the manners of women, let us at least endeavour to become consistent, nor mingle the excesses of barbarism with the weaknesses of civilization. There are certain forms in which vice appears not only monstrous, but ridiculous ; and the cruelty of Nero

is

* Thus related in the news papers last summer : — “ Tuesday last a Black, who a few days ago run away from his master, and got himself christened, with intent to marry his fellow-servant, a white woman, being taken, and sent on board the Captain's ship, in the Thames, took an opportunity of shooting himself through the head.”

is more disgusting than that of Tiberius. When a benevolent mind contemplates the republic of Lycurgus, its admiration is mixt with a degree of horror: we behold a band of determined patriots, irresistible in war, and inflexible in peace; souls to which the severity of virtue was more engaging than its enjoyments; and who seemed to court the dangers of combat, only that they might refuse the rewards of victory.

————— *Serpens, sitis, ardor arenæ*

Dulcia virtuti: gaudet patientia duris,

Latius est, quoties magno sibi constat honestum.

—Temperance, fortitude, and submission to parents or to the laws, were virtues so familiar to these men, that no one derived vanity, or expected praise from possessing them. Yet this admirable republic is tainted by atrocities, which tarnish the lustre of its sublime institutions. When we reflect that to a small society of heroes, a much greater number of men sunk below the rank of brutes; when we consider the unfortunate Helotes, abused, insulted, and enslaved; we less admire the exaltation of one part of our species, than we execrate the degradation of another. Heroism becomes displeasing at such a price, and we prefer the calm of mediocrity to the terrors of so stormy an excellence. But let us not too hastily triumph in the shame of Sparta, lest we aggravate our own condemnation. Let us remember, there is a people who share the government and name of Britons; among whom the cruelty of Sparta is renewed without its virtue. It was some excuse for the disciples of Lycurgus, that if one man had been created by Heaven to obey another, the citizens he had formed best deserved the empire of the world. But what has AMERICA to boast? What are the GRACES or the VIRTUES which distinguish its inhabitants? What are THEIR triumphs in WAR, or their inventions in PEACE? Inglorious soldiers, yet seditious citizens; sordid merchants, and indolent usurpers; behold the men, whose avarice daily depopulates one quarter of the globe! For them the Negro is dragged from his cottage, and his plantane shade;—by them the fury of African tyrants is stimulated by pernicious gold; the rights of nature are invaded; and European faith becomes infamous throughout the world. Yet such is the inconsistency of mankind, that these are the men whose clamours for LIBERTY are heard across the Atlantic Ocean! Murmurings and rebellions are the first fruits of their gratitude, and thus America recompences Europe for the protection she has bestowed.—But are the hopes and fortunes of the species indeed

fallen so low, that freedom will desert that country, whose warriors and philosophers have so often conspired to defend her, to seek an asylum in the forests of America?—Much as an impartial observer may find to blame in Britain, I do not think our Colonies are more acceptable to Providence.—Let the clamours of America prevail, when they shall be unmixt with the clank of chains, and the groans of anguish: Let her aim a dagger at the breast of her milder parent, if she can advance a step without trampling on the dead and dying carcases of her slaves;—But let her remember, that it is in England alone, that laws are equally favourable to liberty and humanity; that it is in England alone, the most sacred rights of nature have received their most awful ratification.—Could I flatter myself that I shall contribute to such a cause, or interest the generous minds of my countrymen to extend an ampler protection to the most innocent and miserable of their own species, the reflection would be more grateful to my soul, than all the laurels of literary fame.—For the rest, I trust, that this motive will, in your eyes, atone for my defects, and that you will allow me the only merit I assume,—truth and disinterestedness; when I entitle myself a friend to human nature: and sincerity, when I subscribe myself,

YOUR FRIEND and ADMIRER.

A

POETICAL EPISTLE, &c.

AR.M'D with thy last sad gift—the power to die,
Thy shafts, stern fortune, I at length defy;
Thy dreadful mercy points me to the shore,
Where all is peace, and men are slaves no more;
—This weapon, ev'n in chains, the brave can wield,
And vanquish'd, quit triumphantly the field.

Yet while I tread that gulph's tremendous brink,
Where nature shudders, and where beings sink,
Ere yet this hand a life of torment close,
And end by one determin'd stroke my woes,
Is there a fond regret, which moves my mind
To pause, and cast a ling'ring look behind?
—O my lov'd bride!—for I have call'd thee mine,
Dearer than life, whom I with life resign,

For thee ev'n here this faithful breast shall glow,
 One pang shall rend me, and one tear shall flow.—
 How shall I soothe thy grief, since fate denies
 Thy pious duties to my closing eyes?
 I cannot clasp thee in a last embrace,
 Nor gaze in silent anguish on thy face ;
 I cannot raise these fetter'd arms for thee,
 To ask that mercy heaven denied to me ;
 Yet shall thy tender breast my sorrows share,
 Bleed for my wounds, and feel my deep despair.
 Yet shall thy tears bedew a wretch's grave,
 Whom thou, and only thou, would'st wish to save.
 Receive these sighs—to thee my soul I breathe——
 Fond love in dying groans is all I can bequeathe.

Why did I, slave, beyond my lot aspire?
 Why didst thou fan, fair maid, the fatal fire?
 For thee I bade my drooping soul revive ;
 For thee alone I could have borne to live ;
 And love, I said, shall make me large amends,
 For persecuting foes, and faithless friends ;

Fool that I was! enur'd so long to pain,
 To trust to hope, or dream of joy again.
 Joy, stranger guest, too soon my faith betray'd,
 And love but points to death's eternal shade,
 There while I rest from mis'ry's galling load,
 Be thou the care of ev'ry pitying God!
 Nor may that Dæmon's unpropitious power,
 Who shed his influence on my natal hour,
 Pursue thee too with unrelenting hate,
 And blend with mine the colour of thy fate.
 For thee may those soft hours return again,
 When pleasure led thee smiling o'er the plain,
 Ere, like some hell-born spectre of dismay,
 I cross'd thy path, and darken'd all the way.
 Ye waving groves, which from this cell I view!
 Ye meads now glitt'ring with the morning dew!
 Ye flowers, which blush on yonder purple shore,
 That at my baneful step shall fade no more,
 A long farewell!—I ask no vernal bloom—
 No pageant wreaths to wither on my tomb.

—Let serpents hiss and night-shade blacken there,
To mark the friendless victim of despair!

And better in th' untimely grave to rot,
The world and all it's cruelties forgot,
Than dragg'd once more beyond the Western main,
To groan beneath some dastard planter's chain,
Where my poor countrymen in bondage wait,
The slow enfranchisement of ling'ring fate.
Oh! my heart sinks, my dying eyes o'erflow,
When mem'ry paints the picture of their woe!
For I have seen them, ere the dawn of day,
Rouz'd by the lash, go forth their chearless way,
And while their souls with shame and anguish burn,
Salute with groans unwelcome morn's return,
And, chiding every hour the slow-pac'd sun,
Endure their toils, till all his race was run,
Without one hope—to mitigate their pain—
One distant hope, sweet freedom to regain;

Then

Then like the dull unpitied brutes repair
 To stalls more wretched, and to coarser fare,
 Thank Heav'n, one day of misery was o'er,
 And sink to sleep, and wish to wake no more.
 Sleep on! dear, lost companions in despair,
 Whose sufferings still my latest tears shall share!
 Sleep, and enjoy the only boon of Heav'n
 To you in common with your tyrants giv'n.
 O while soft slumber from their couches flies,
 Still may it's balmy blessings seal your eyes;
 Awhile in sweet oblivion lull your woes,
 And brightest visions gladden your repose!
 Let fancy now, unconscious of the change,
 Thro' your own climes, and native forests range,
 Still waft ye to each well-known stream and grove,
 And visit every long-lost scene ye love!
 —I sleep no more—nor in the midnight shade,
 Invoke ideal phantoms to my aid,
 Nor wake again, abandon'd and forlorn,
 To find each dear delusion fled at morn;

A slow-consuming death I will not wait,
 But snatch at least one fullen boon from fate ;
 Yon ruddy streaks the rising sun proclaim,
 That never more shall beam upon my shame ;
 Bright orb ! for others let thy glory shine—
 The gloomy privilege to die, be mine.
 Beneath such wrongs let pallid Christians live,
 Such they can perpetrate, and may forgive.

And thou, whose impious avarice and pride
 Thy God's blest symbol to my brows denied,
 Forbade me or the rights of man to claim,
 Or share with thee a Christian's hallow'd name,
 Thou too farewell !—for not beyond the grave,
 Thy power extends, nor is my dust thy slave.
 Go bribe thy kindred ruffians with thy gold,
 But dream not nature's rights are bought and sold.
 In vain Heav'n spread so wide the swelling sea ;
 Vast watry barrier, 'twixt thy world and me ;

Swift

Swift round the globe, by earth nor heav'n controul'd,
 Fly proud oppression and dire lust of gold.
 Wheree'er the thirsty hell-hounds take their way,
 Still nature bleeds, and man becomes their prey.
 In the wild wastes of Afric's sandy plain,
 Where roars the lion through his drear domain,
 To curb the savage monarch in the chace,
 There too Heav'n planted man's majestic race;
 Bade reason's sons with nobler titles rise,
 Lift high their brow sublime, and scan the skies.*
 What tho' the sun in his meridian blaze
 On their scorch'd bodies dart his fiercest rays?
 What tho' no rosy tints adorn their face,
 No filken ringlets shine with flowing grace?

*—"It is amazing, that such a rude and illiterate people should reason so
 "pertinently in regard to the Heavenly Bodies; there is no doubt but that
 "with proper instruments, and a good will, they would become excellent
 "Astronomers."

M. Adanson's Voyage to Senegal, &c.

Yet of etherial temper are their souls,
 And in their veins the tide of honour rolls;
 And valour kindles there the hero's flame,
 Contempt of death, and thirst of martial fame.
 And pity melts the sympathizing breast,
 Ah! fatal virtue!—for the brave distressed.

My tortur'd breast, O sad remembrance spare!
 Why dost thou plant thy keenest daggers there,
 And shew me what I was, and aggravate despair?
 Ye streams of Gambia, and thou sacred shade!
 Where, in my youth's first dawn I joyful stray'd,
 Oft have I rous'd amid your caverns dim,
 The howling tiger, and the lion grim,
 In vain they gloried in their headlong force,
 My javelin pierc'd them in their raging course.
 But little did my boding mind bewray,
 The victor and his hopes were doom'd a prey
 To human beasts more fell, more cruel far than they.

Ah!

Ah! what avails it that in every plain,
 I purchas'd glory with my blood in vain?
 Ah! what avails the conqu'ror's laurel meed,
 The generous purpose or the dauntless deed?
 Fall'n are my trophies, blasted is my fame,
 Myself become a thing without a name,
 The sport of haughty Lords and ev'n of slaves the shame.

Curst be the winds, and curst the tides that bore
 These European robbers to our shore!
 O be that hour involv'd in endless night,
 When first their streamers met my wond'ring fight,
 I call'd the warriors from the mountain's steep,
 To meet these unknown terrors of the deep;
 Rouz'd by my voice, their generous bosoms glow,
 They rush indignant, and demand the foe,
 And poize the darts of death and twang the bended bow.
 When lo! advancing o'er the sea-beat plain,
 I mark'd the leader of a warlike train.

Unlike his features to our swarthy race.
 And golden hair play'd round his ruddy face.
 While with insidious smile and lifted hand,
 He thus accosts our unsuspecting band.
 " Ye valiant chiefs, whom love of glory leads
 " To martial combats, and heroic deeds;
 " No fierce invader your retreat explores,
 " No hostile banner waves along your shores.
 " From the dread tempests of the deep we fly,
 " Then lay, ye chiefs, these pointed terrors by.
 " And O, your hospitable cares extend,
 " So may ye never need the aid ye lend !
 " So may ye still repeat to every grove
 " The songs of freedom, and the strains of love !"
 Soft as the accents of the traitor flow,
 We melt with pity, and unbend the bow ;
 With lib'ral hand our choicest gifts we bring,
 And point the wand'ers to the freshest spring.

Nine days we feasted on the Gambian strand,
 And songs of friendship echo'd o'er the land *.
 When the tenth morn her rising lustre gave,
 The chief approach'd me by the sounding wave.
 " O, youth," he said, " what gifts can we bestow,
 " Or how requite the mighty debt we owe?
 " For lo ! propitious to our vows, the gale
 " With milder omens fills the swelling sail.

* Which way soever I turned my eyes on this pleasant spot, I beheld a perfect image of pure nature, an agreeable solitude bounded on every side by charming landscapes ; the rural situation of cottages in the midst of trees ; the ease and indolence of the Negroes, reclined under the shade of their spreading foliage ; the simplicity of their dress and manners ; the whole revived in my mind the idea of our first parents, and I seemed to contemplate the world in its primitive state. They are, generally speaking, very good-natured, sociable, and obliging. I was not a little pleased with this, my first reception ; it convinced me that there ought to be considerable abatement made in the accounts I had read and heard of the savage characters of the Africans.

M. Adanson's Voyage to Senegal, &c.

" To-

" To-morrow's sun shall see our ships explore
 " These deeps, and quit your hospitable shore.
 " Yet while we linger, let us still employ
 " The number'd hours in friendship and in joy;
 " Ascend our ships, their treasures are your own,
 " And taste the produce of a world unknown."

He spoke ; with fatal eagerness we burn,

Ah! wretches, destin'd never to return!

The smiling traitors with insidious care,

The goblet proffer, and the feast prepare,

'Till dark oblivion shades our closing eyes,

And all disarm'd each fainting warrior lies,

O wretches ! to your future evils blind !

O morn for ever present to my mind !

When bursting from the treach'rous bands of sleep,

Rous'd by the murmers of the dashing deep,

I woke

I woke to bondage, and ignoble pains,
 And all the horrors of a life in chains *.
 Where were your thunders in that dreadful hour,
 Ye Gods of Afric! where your heavenly power?
 Did not my prayers, my groans, my tears invoke
 Your slumb'ring justice to direct the stroke?

* "As we past along the coast, we very often lay before a town, and fired a gun for the natives to come off, but no soul came near us; at length we learnt by some ships that were trading down the coast, that the natives came seldom on board an English ship, for fear of being detained or carried off; yet at last some ventured on board; but if these chanced to spy any arms, they would all immediately take to their canoes, and make the best of their way home."

Smith's Voyage to Guinea.

"It is well known that many of the European nations, have, very unjustly and inhumanly, without any provocation, stolen away, from time to time, abundance of the people, not only on this coast, but almost every where in Guinea, who have come on board their ships, in a harmless and confiding manner; these they have in great numbers carried away, and sold in the plantations."

J. Barbot's Description of Guinea.

E

No

No power descended to assist the brave,
 No lightnings flash'd, and I became a slave.
 From Lord to Lord my wretched carcase fold,
 In Christian traffic, for their fordid gold :
 Fate's blackest clouds still gather'd o'er my head ;
 And now they burst, and mix me with the dead.

Yet when my fortune cast my lot with thine,
 And bade beneath one roof our labours join,
 Surpriz'd I felt the tumults of my breast
 Lull'd by thy beauties, and subside to rest.
 Delusive hopes my changing soul enflame,
 And gentler transports agitate my frame.
 What tho' obscure thy birth, superior grace
 Beam'd in the glowing features of thy face;
 Ne'er had my youth such winning softness seen,
 Where Afric's fable beauties danc'd the green,
 When some bright maid receiv'd her lover's vow,
 And bound the offer'd chaplet to her brow ;

While

While on thy languid eyes I fondly gaze,
 And tremble while I meet their azure rays,
 O mildest virgin, thou did'st not despise
 The humble homage of a captive's sighs.
 By heav'n abandon'd and by man betray'd,
 Each hope resign'd of comfort or of aid,
 Thy gen'rous love could every sorrow end,
 In thee I found a mistress and a friend;
 Still as I told the story of my woes,
 With heaving sighs thy lovely bosom rose;
 The trick'ling drops of liquid chrystal stole
 Down thy fair cheek, and mark'd thy pitying soul;
 Dear drops! upon my bleeding heart, like balm
 They fell, and soon my wounded soul grew calm,
 Then my lov'd country, parents, friends forgot;
 Heaven I absolv'd, nor murmur'd at my lot,
 Thy sacred smiles could every pang remove,
 And liberty became less dear than love.

—Ah!

— Ah! where is now that voice which lull'd my woes?
 That Angel-face, which sooth'd me to repose?
 By Nature tempted, and with passion blind,
 Are these the joys Hope whisper'd to my mind?
 Is this the end of constancy like thine?
 Are these the transports of a flame like mine?
 My hopes, my joys, are vanish'd into air,
 And now of all that once engag'd my care,
 These chains alone remain, this weapon and despair!

— So may thy life's gay prospects all be curst,
 And all thy flatt'ring hopes like bubbles burst,
 Thus end thy golden visions, son of pride!
 Whose ruthless ruffians tore me from my bride;
 That beauteous prize Heav'n had reserv'd at last,
 Sweet recompence for all my sorrows past.
 O may thy harden'd bosom never prove
 The tender joys of friendship or of love!
 Yet may'st thou, doom'd to hopeless flames a prey,
 In disappointed passion pine away!

May every transport violate thy rest,
 Which tears the jealous lover's gloomy breast!
 May secret anguish gnaw thy cruel heart,
 'Till death in all his terrors wing the dart;
 Then to complete the horror of thy doom,
 A favour'd rival smile upon thy tomb!

Why does my ling'ring soul her flight delay?
 Come, lovely maid, and gild the dreary way!
 Come, wildly rushing with disorder'd charms,
 And clasp thy bleeding lover to thy arms,
 Close his sad eyes, receive his parting breath,
 And sooth him sinking in the shades of death!
 O come—thy presence can my pangs beguile,
 And bid th' inexorable tyrant smile;
 Transported will I languish on thy breast,
 And sink in raptures to eternal rest:
 The hate of men, the wrongs of fate forgive,
 Forget my woes, and almost wish to live.

F

—Ah!

—Ah! rather fly, lest ought of doubt controul
 The dreadful purpose lab'ring in my soul,
 Tears must not bend me, nor thy beauties move,
 This hour I triumph over fate and love.

—Again with tenfold rage my bosom burns;
 And all the tempest of my soul returns;
 Again the furies fire my madding brain,
 And death extends his shelt'ring arms in vain;
 For unreveng'd I fall, unpity'd die;
 And with my blood glut Pride's insatiate eye!

Thou Christian God! to whom so late I bow'd,
 To whom my soul its fond allegiance vow'd,
 When crimes like these thy injur'd pow'r prophane,
 O God of Nature! art thou call'd in vain?
 Did'st thou for this sustain a mortal wound,
 While Heav'n, and Earth, and Hell, hung trembling round?
 That these vile fetters might my body bind,
 And agony like this distract my mind?

On thee I call'd with reverential awe,
 Ador'd thy wisdom, and embrac'd thy law;
 Yet mark thy destin'd convert as he lies,
 His groans of anguish, and his livid eyes,
 These galling chains, polluted with his blood,
 Then bid his tongue proclaim thee just and good!
 But if too weak thy boasted power to spare,
 Or suff'rings move thee not, O hear despair!
 Thy hopes, and blessings I alike resign,
 But let revenge, let swift revenge be mine!
 Be this proud bark, which now triumphant rides,
 Toss'd by the winds, and shatter'd by the tides!
 And may these fiends, who now exulting view
 The horrors of my fortune, feel them too!
 Be their's the torment of a ling'ring fate,
 Slow as thy justice, dreadful as my hate,
 Condemn'd to grasp the riven plank in vain,
 And chac'd by all the monsters of the main,
 And while they spread their sinking arms to thee,
 Then let their fainting souls remember me!

—Thanks

—Thanks, righteous God!—Revenge shall yet be mine,
 Yon flashing lightning gave the dreadful sign
 I see the flames of heavenly anger hurl'd,
 I hear your thunders shake a guilty world;
 The time shall come, the fated hour is nigh,
 When guiltless blood shall penetrate the sky;
 Amid these horrors, and involving night,
 Prophetic visions flash before my sight,
 Eternal justice wakes, and in their turn,
 The vanquish'd triumph, and the victors mourn;—
 Then the stern genius of my native land,
 With delegated vengeance in his hand,
 Shall raging cross the troubled seas, and pour
 The plagues of Hell on yon devoted shore.
 What tides of ruin mark his ruthless way!
 How shriek the fiends exulting o'er their prey!
 I see your warriors gasping on the ground,—
 I hear your flaming cities crash around.—
 In vain with trembling heart the coward turns,
 In vain with generous rage the valiant burns.—

One common ruin, one promiscuous grave
 O'erwhelms the dastard, and receives the brave—
 For Afric triumphs!—his avenging rage,
 No tears can soften, and no blood assuage.
 He smites the trembling waves, and at the shock,
 Your fleets are dash'd upon the pointed rock.
 He waves his flaming dart, and o'er your plains,
 In mournful silence, desolation reigns—
 Fly swift ye years!—Arise thou glorious morn!
 Thou great avenger of thy race be born!
 The conqu'ror's palm, and deathless fame be thine!—
 One gen'rous stroke, and liberty be mine!
 —And now ye powers! to whom the brave are dear,
 Receive me falling, and your suppliant hear.
 To you this unpolluted blood I pour,
 To you that spirit which ye gave restore!
 I ask no lazy pleasures to possess,
 No long eternity of happiness;—
 But if unstain'd by voluntary guilt,
 At your great call this being I have spilt,

For all the pangs which innocent I shar'd,
 For all I suffer'd, and for all I dar'd,—
 O lead me to that spot, that sacred shore,
 Where souls are free, and men oppress no more!

THE END.



At your great call this being I have fill'd,

But if unaid'd by voluntary guilt,

No long eternity of happiness;—

I ask no heavenly pleasure to hold;

To you that spirit which ye give restore!

To you this unrepented blood I pour;

Receive me falling, and your suppliant hear.

—And now ye power! to whom the brave are dear,

One get your stroke, and liberty mine!

The cord for a palm, and death's lance be mine—

Then great avenger of thy race be bold!

Fly with ye years!